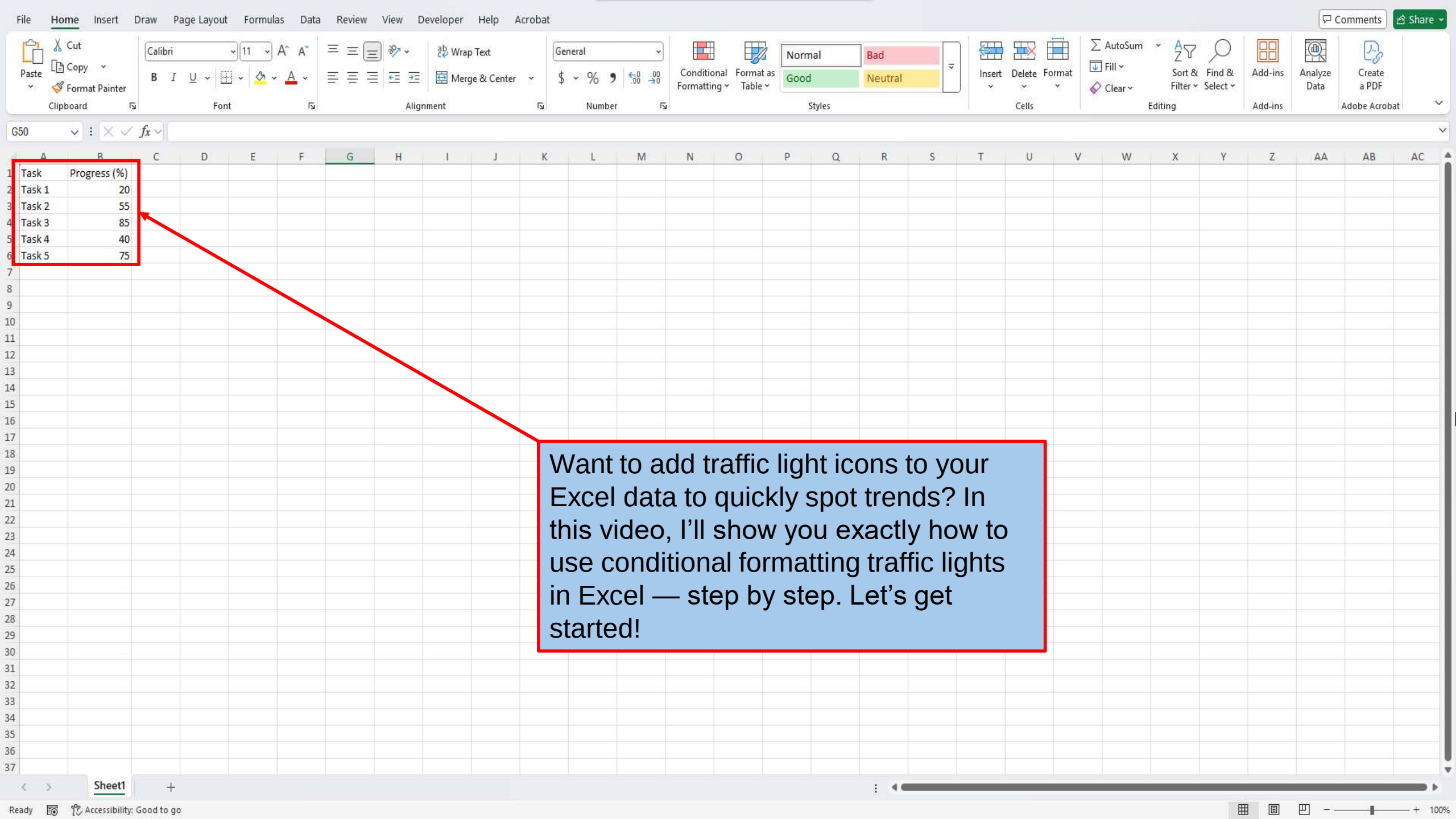
File Home Insert Draw Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Developer Help Acrobat
Comments Share
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Conditional Formatting Format as Table
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Cells
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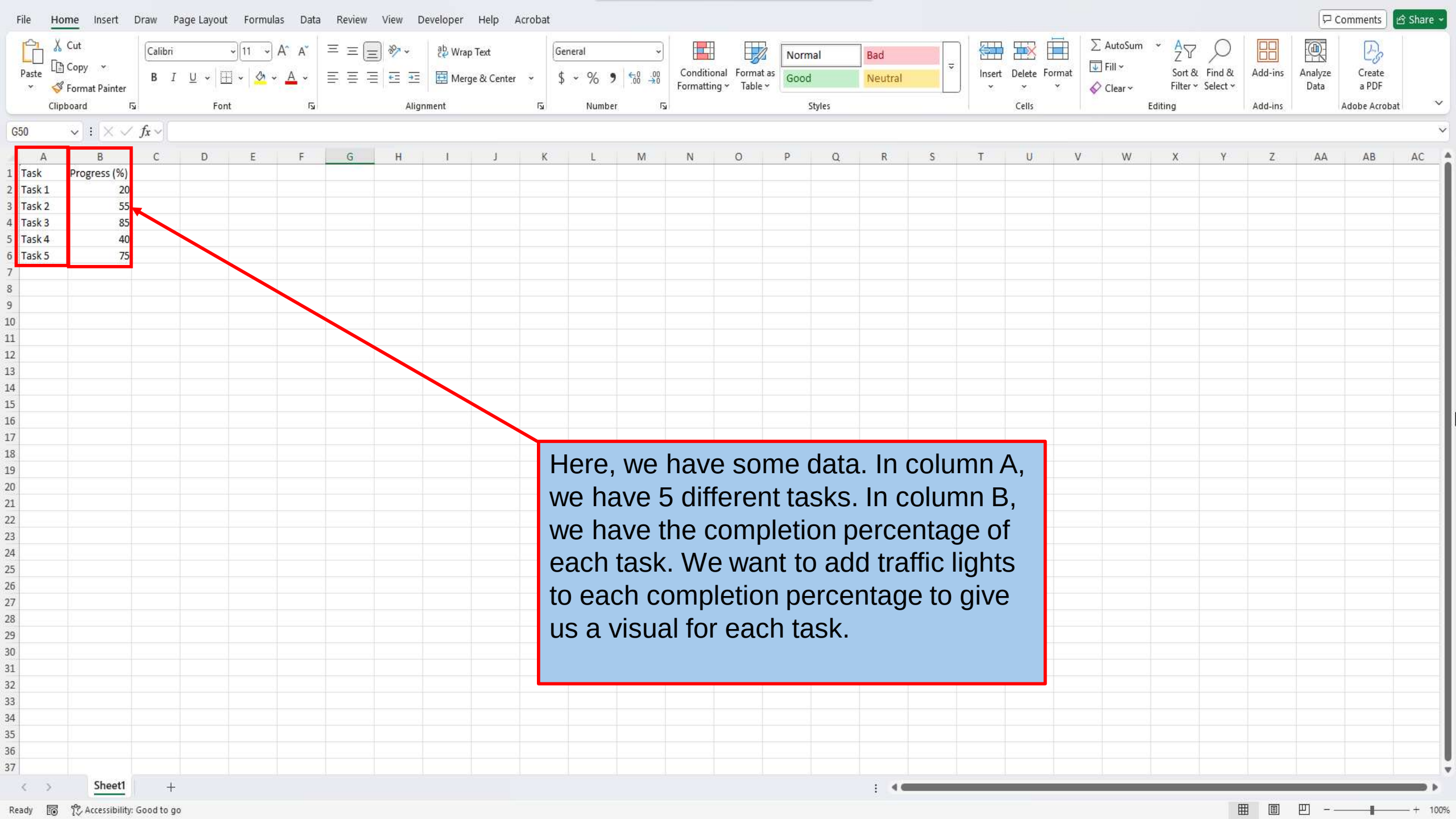
Sort & Filter Find & Select
Editing
Add-ins
Analyze Data
Create a PDF
Adobe Acrobat
G50
Task Progress (%)
Task 1 20
Task 2 55
Task 3 85
Task 4 40
Task 5 75
Want to add traffic light icons to your Excel data to quickly spot trends? In this video, I'll show you exactly how to use conditional formatting traffic lights in Excel — step by step. Let's get started!
Sheet1
Ready
Accessibility: Good to go
100%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Editing
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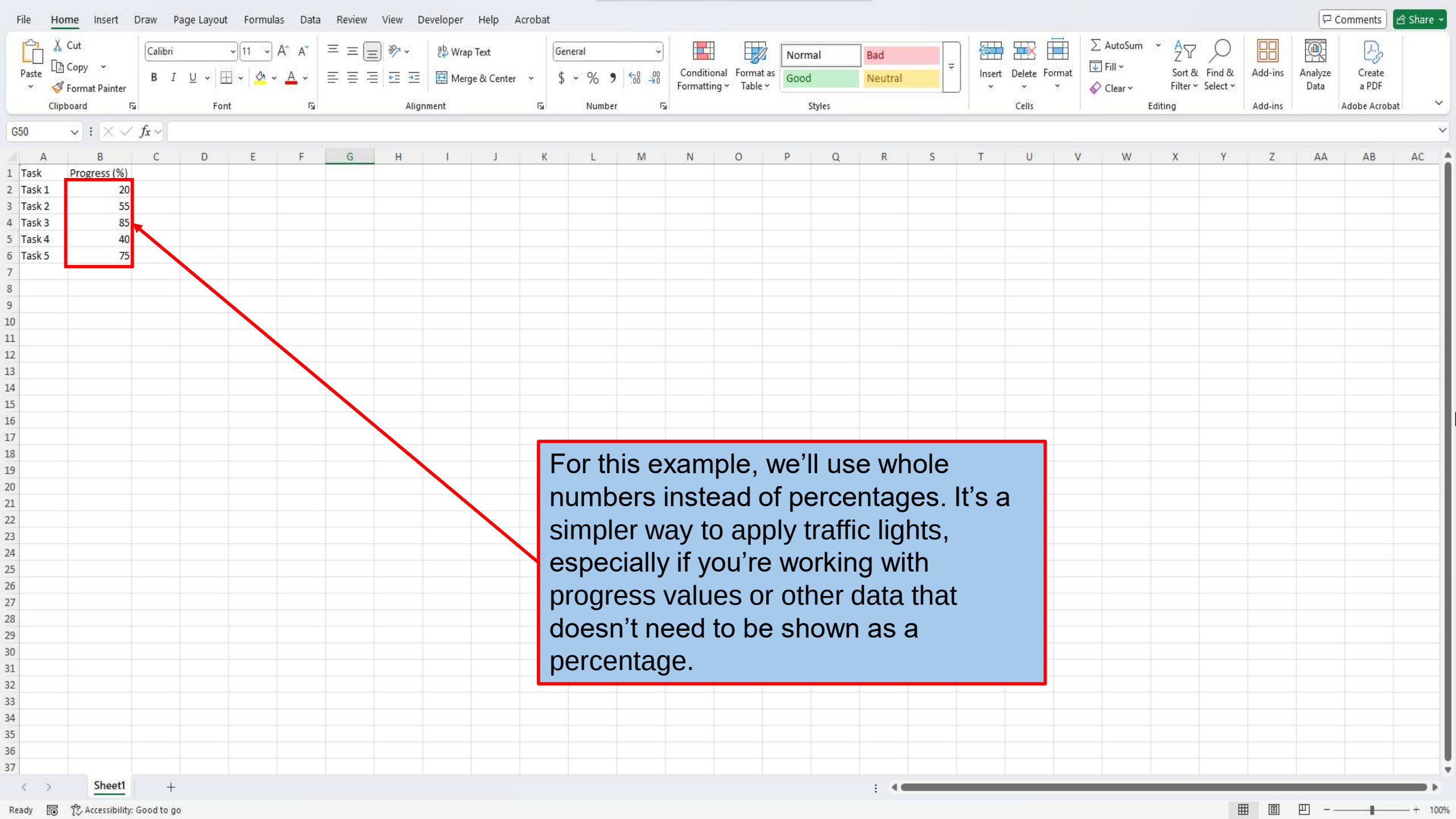
Analyze Data
Create a PDF
Adobe Acrobat
G50
Task
Progress (%)
Task 1
20
Task 2
55
Task 3
85
Task 4
40
Task 5
75
Here, we have some data. In column A, we have 5 different tasks. In column B, we have the completion percentage of each task. We want to add traffic lights to each completion percentage to give us a visual for each task.
Sheet1
Ready
Accessibility: Good to go
100%


File Home Insert Draw Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Developer Help Acrobat
Comments Share
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Insert Delete Format
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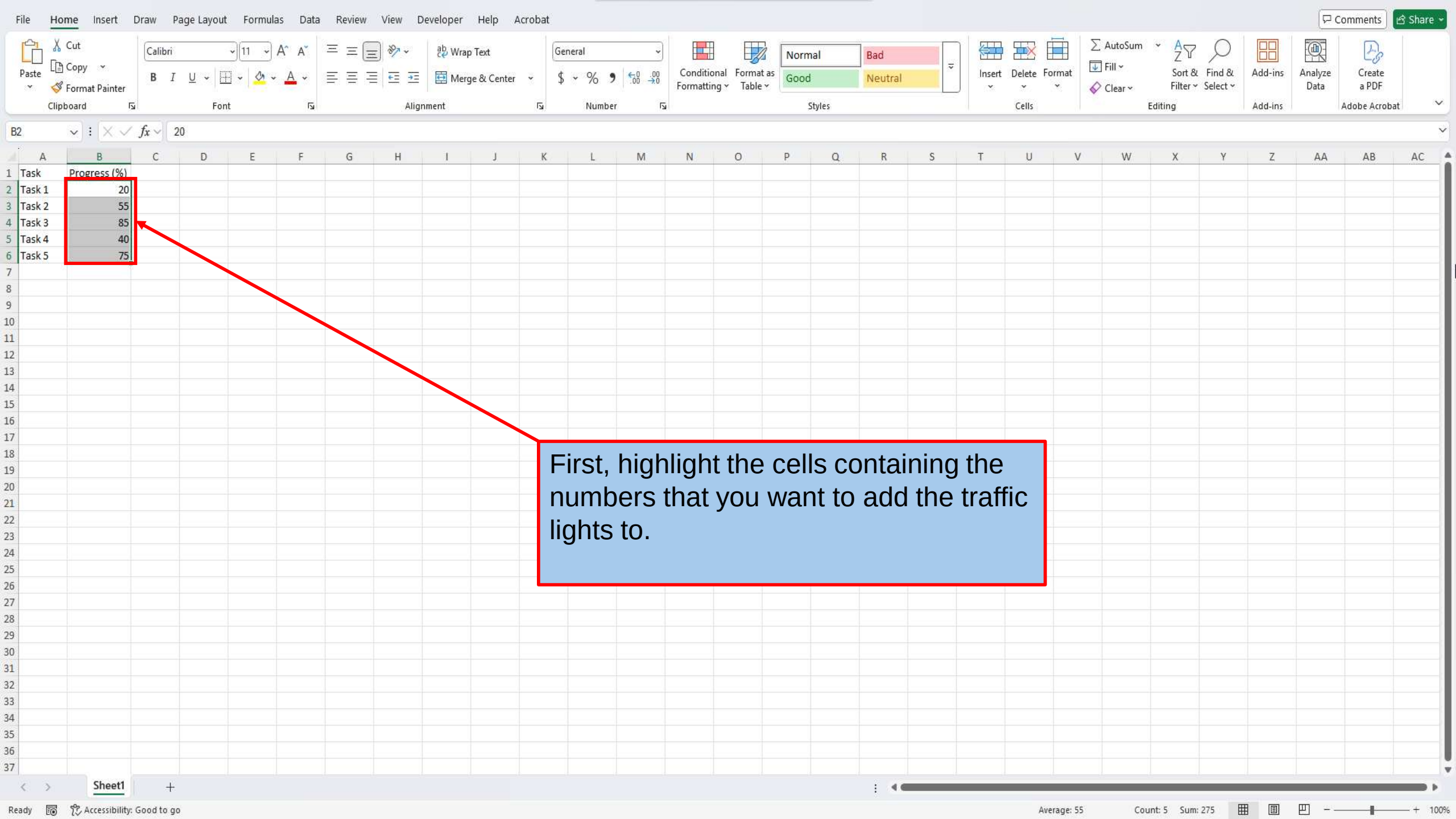
Editing
Add-ins
Add-ins
Analyze Data
Create a PDF
Adobe Acrobat
G50
Task Progress (%)
Task 1 20
Task 2 55
Task 3 85
Task 4 40
Task 5 75
For this example, we'll use whole numbers instead of percentages. It's a simpler way to apply traffic lights, especially if you're working with progress values or other data that doesn't need to be shown as a percentage.
Sheet1
Ready
Accessibility: Good to go
100%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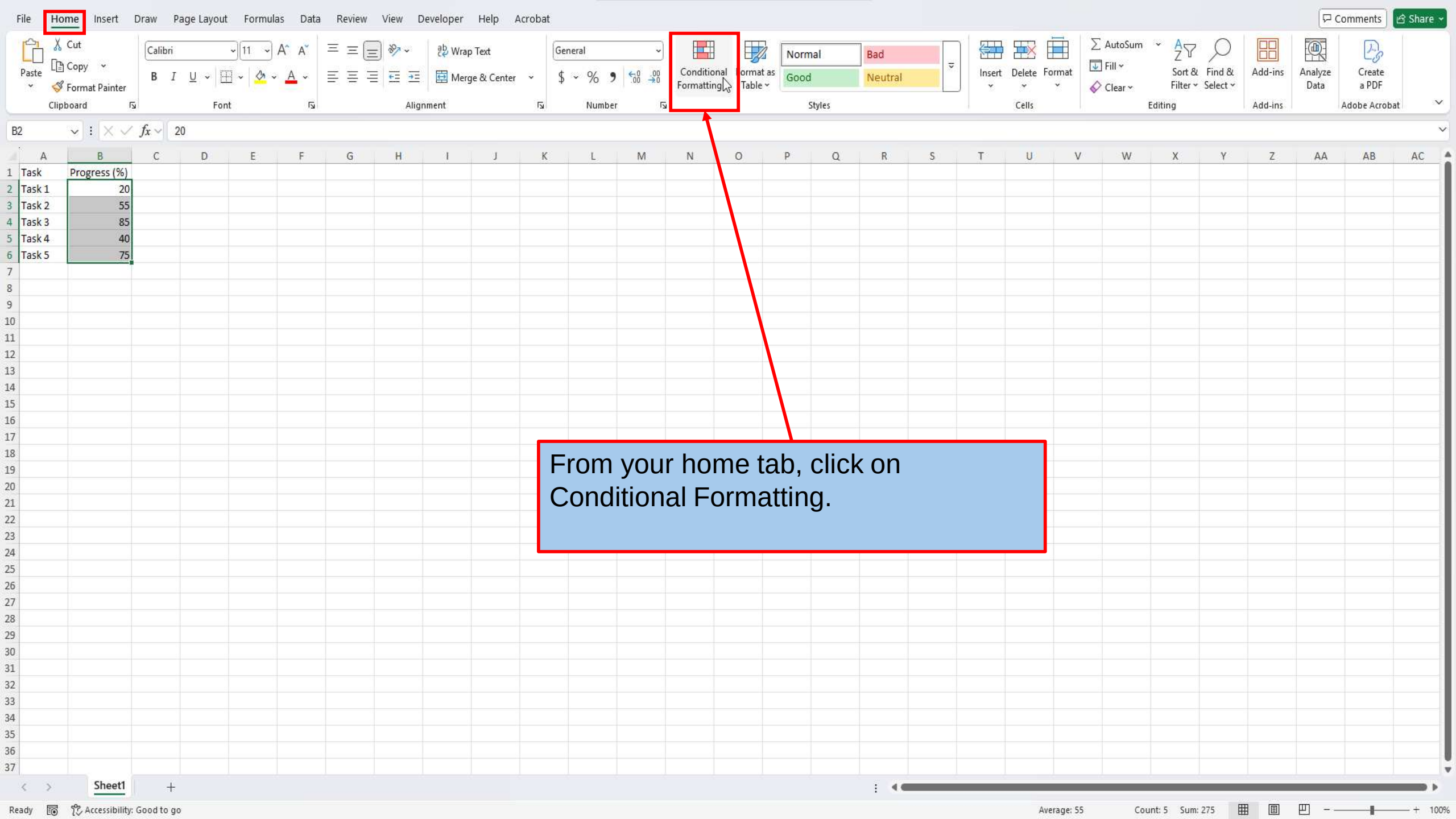
Find & Select
Editing
Add-ins
Analyze Data
Create a PDF
Adobe Acrobat
B2
20
Task
Progress (%)
Task 1
20
Task 2
55
Task 3
85
Task 4
40
Task 5
75
First, highlight the cells containing the numbers that you want to add the traffic lights to.
Sheet1
Ready
Accessibility: Good to go
Average: 55
Count: 5
Sum: 275
100%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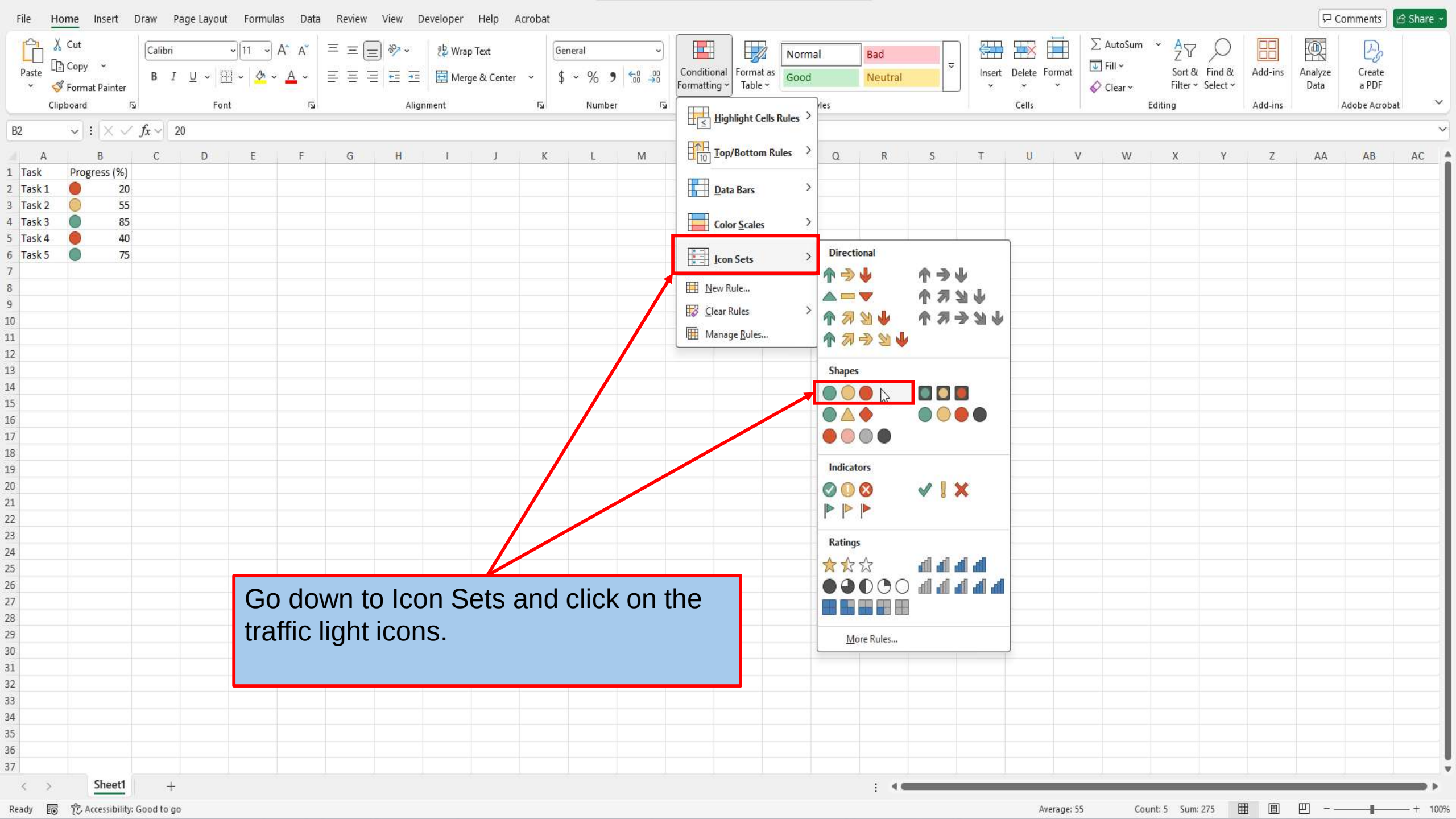
Analyze Data
Create a PDF
Adobe Acrobat
B2
20
Task
Progress (%)
Task 1
20
Task 2
55
Task 3
85
Task 4
40
Task 5
75
From your home tab, click on Conditional Formatting.
Sheet1
Ready
Accessibility: Good to go
Average: 55
Count: 5
Sum: 275
100%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Merge & Center
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Number
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Insert
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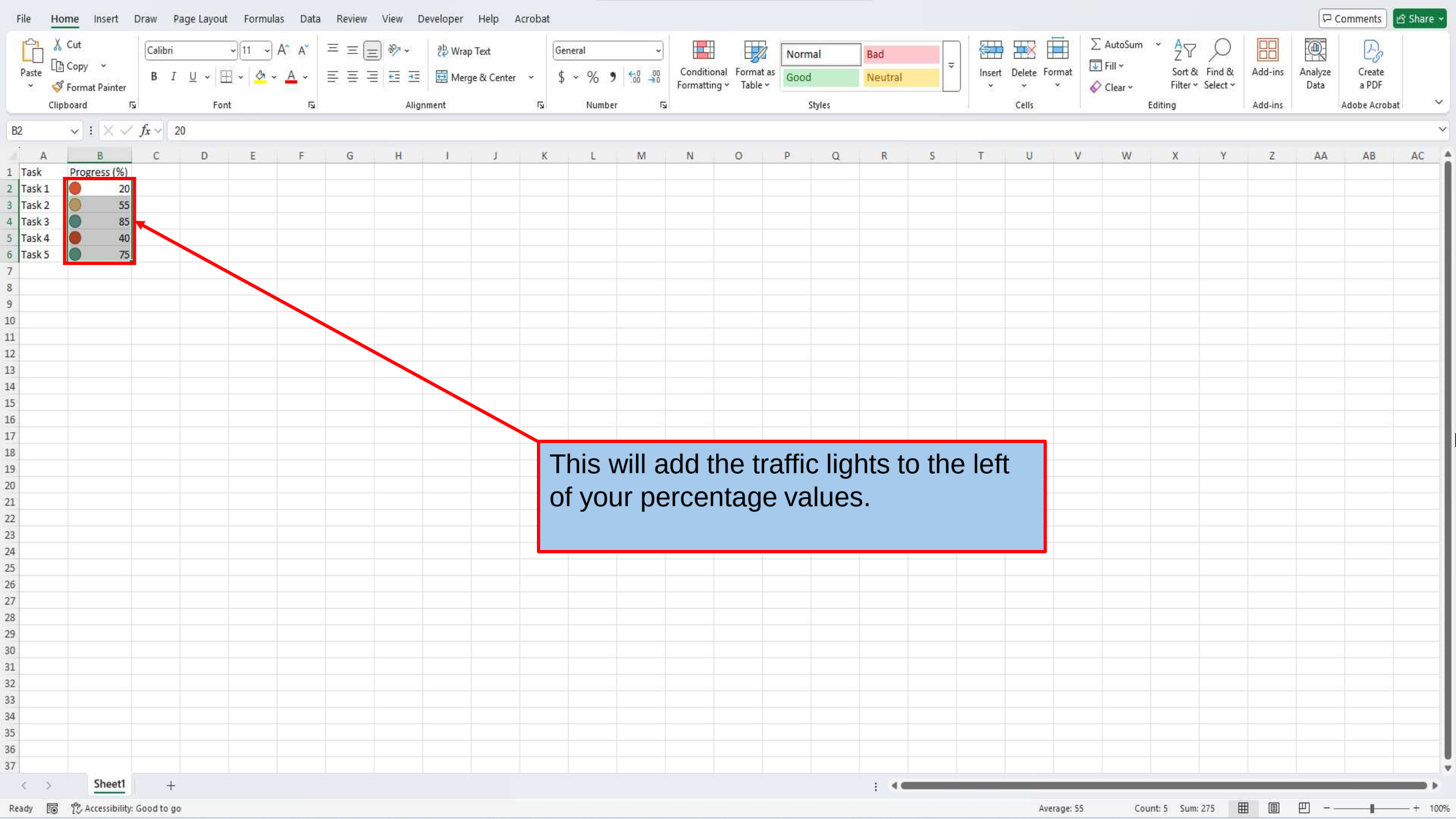
Format
Cells
AutoSum
Fill
Clear
Sort & Filter
Find & Select
Editing
Add-ins
Analyze Data
Create a PDF
Adobe Acrobat
B2
20
Highlight Cells Rules
Top/Bottom Rules
Data Bars
Color Scales
Icon Sets
New Rule...
Clear Rules
Manage Rules...
Directional
Shapes
Indicators
Ratings
More Rules...
Task
Progress (%)
Task 1
20
Task 2
55
Task 3
85
Task 4
40
Task 5
75
Go down to Icon Sets and click on the traffic light icons.
Sheet1
Ready
Accessibility: Good to go
Average: 55
Count: 5
Sum: 275
100%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Merge & Center
Alignment
General
Number
Conditional Formatting
Format as Table
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Insert
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Fill
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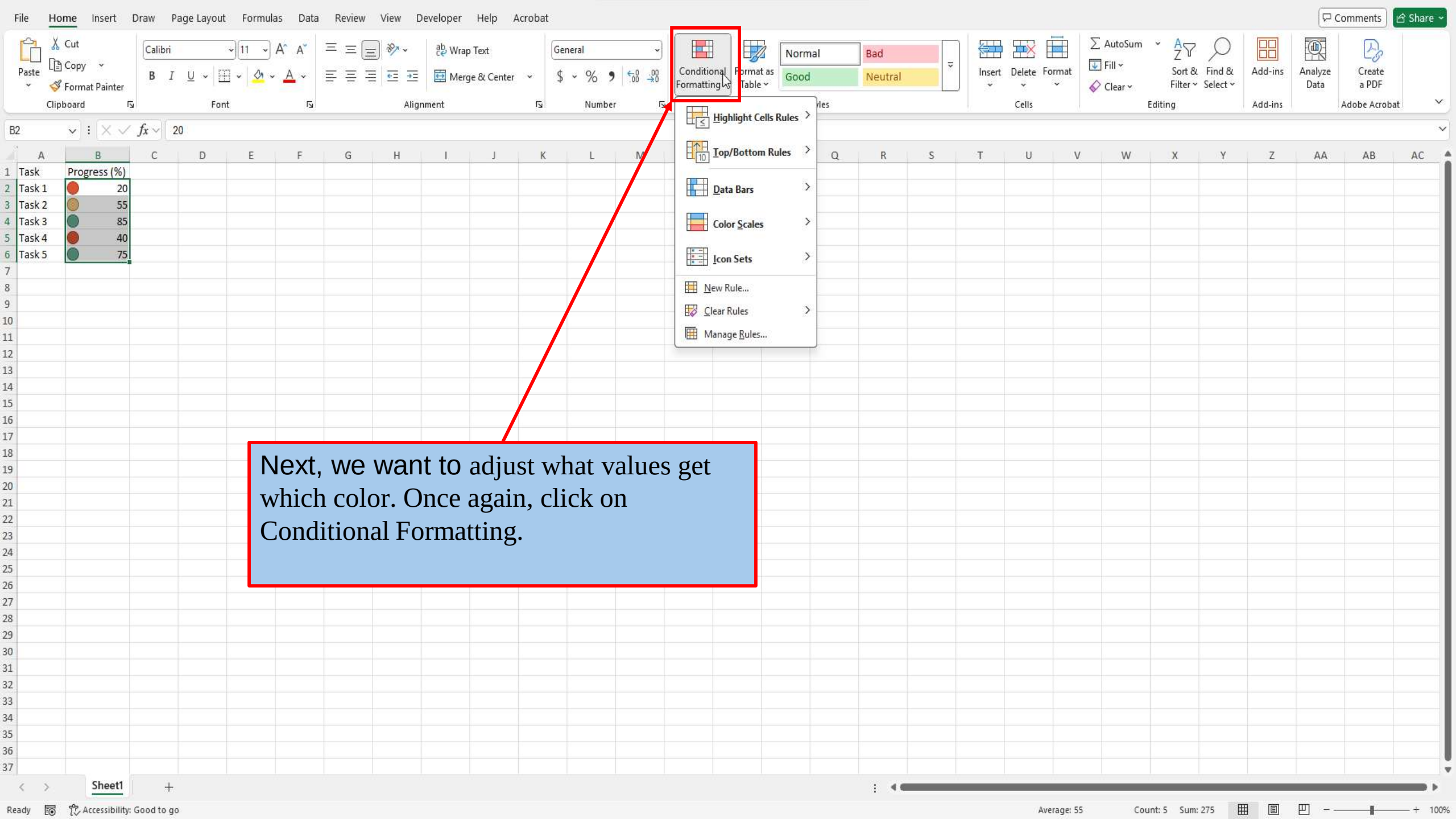
Sort & Filter
Find & Select
Editing
Add-ins
Analyze Data
Create a PDF
Adobe Acrobat
B2
20
Task
Progress (%)
Task 1
20
Task 2
55
Task 3
85
Task 4
40
Task 5
75
This will add the traffic lights to the left of your percentage values.
Sheet1
Ready
Accessibility: Good to go
Average: 55
Count: 5
Sum: 275
100%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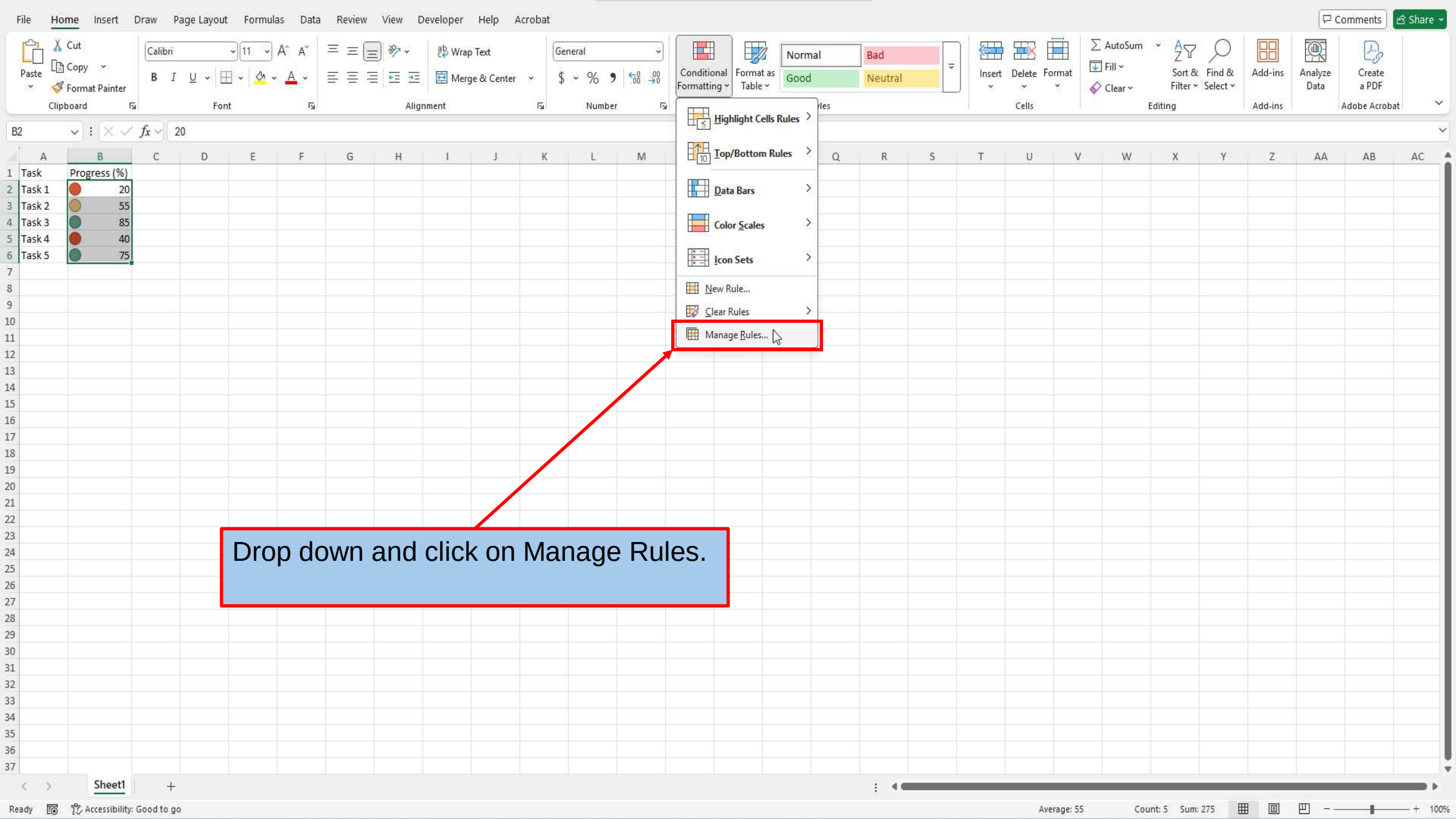
Find & Select
Editing
Add-ins
Analyze Data
Create a PDF
Adobe Acrobat
Highlight Cells Rules
Top/Bottom Rules
Data Bars
Color Scales
Icon Sets
New Rule...
Clear Rules
Manage Rules...
B2
20
Task
Progress (%)
Task 1
20
Task 2
55
Task 3
85
Task 4
40
Task 5
75
Next, we want to adjust what values get which color. Once again, click on Conditional Formatting.
Sheet1
Ready
Accessibility: Good to go
Average: 55
Count: 5
Sum: 275
100%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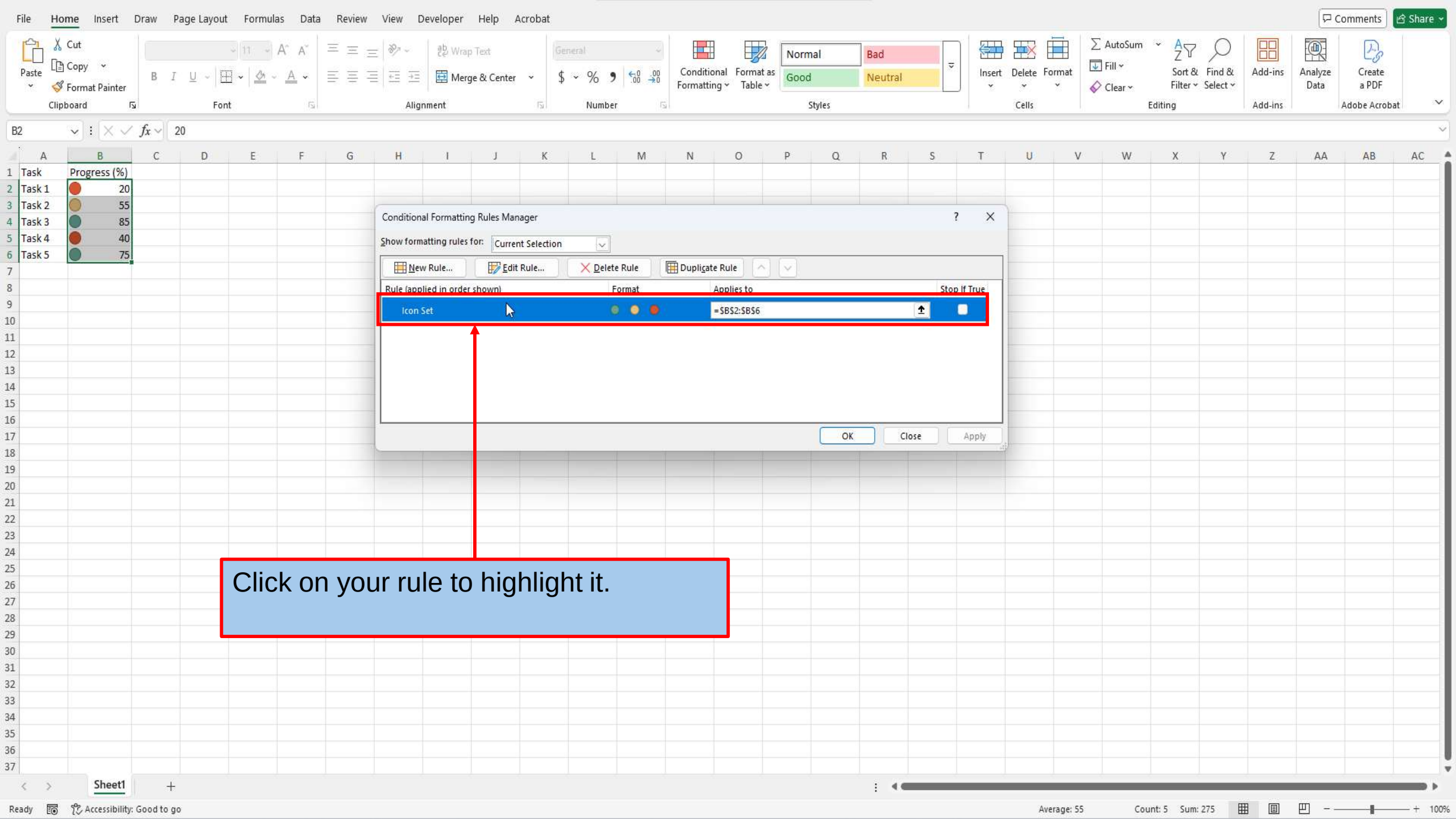
Analyze Data
Create a PDF
Adobe Acrobat
B2
20
Highlight Cells Rules
Top/Bottom Rules
Data Bars
Color Scales
Icon Sets
New Rule...
Clear Rules
Manage Rules...
Task
Progress (%)
Task 1
20
Task 2
55
Task 3
85
Task 4
40
Task 5
75
Drop down and click on Manage Rules.
Sheet1
Ready
Accessibility: Good to go
Average: 55
Count: 5
Sum: 275
100%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Conditional Formatting
Format as Table
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Insert
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AutoSum
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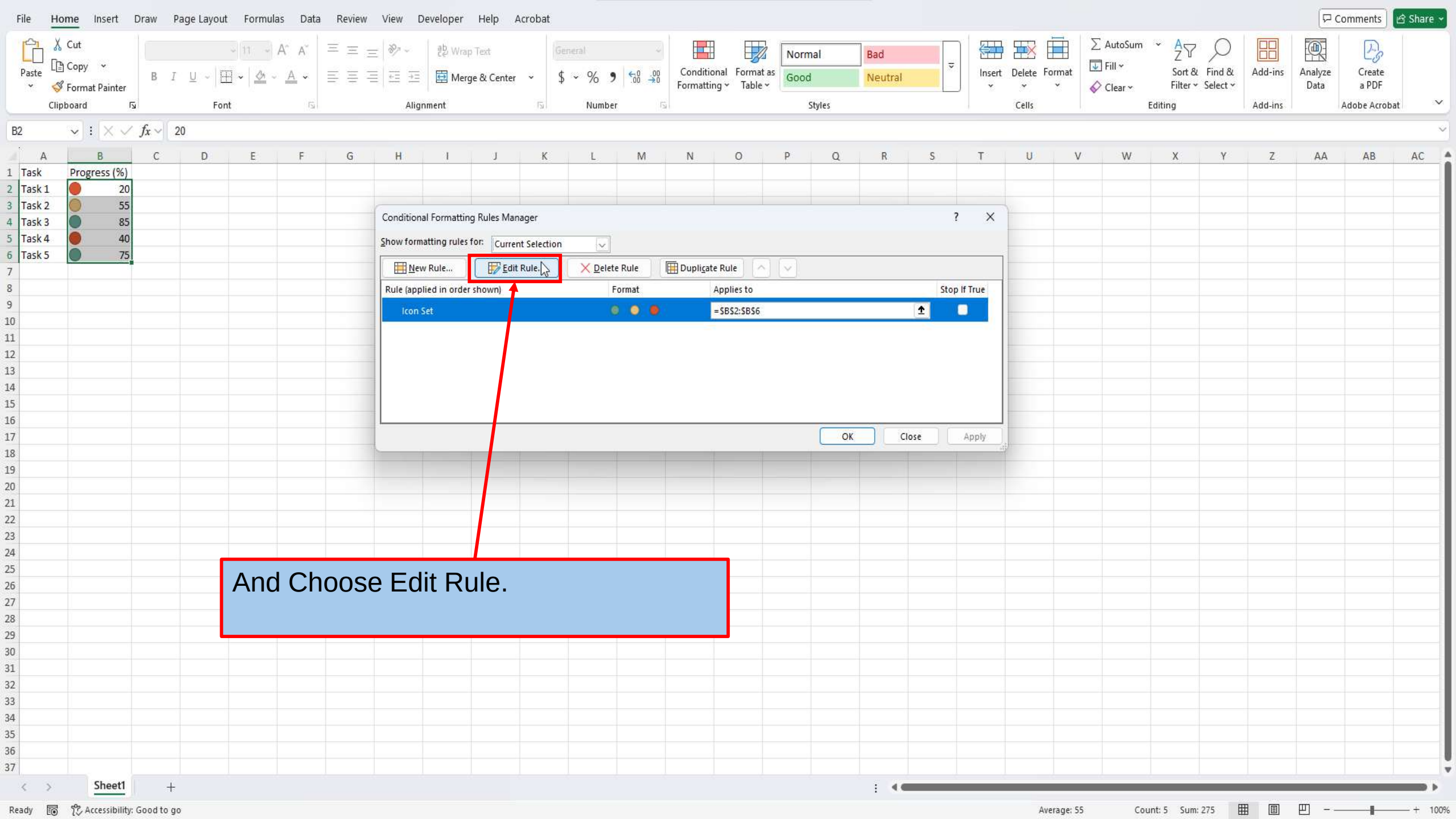
Sort & Filter
Find & Select
Editing
Add-ins
Analyze Data
Create a PDF
Adobe Acrobat
B2
20
Task
Progress (%)
Task 1
20
Task 2
55
Task 3
85
Task 4
40
Task 5
75
Conditional Formatting Rules Manager
Show formatting rules for:
Current Selection
New Rule...
Edit Rule...
Delete Rule
Duplicate Rule
Rule (applied in order shown)
Format
Applies to
Stop If True
Icon Set
=$B$2:$B$6
OK
Close
Apply
Click on your rule to highlight it.
Sheet1
Ready
Accessibility: Good to go
Average: 55
Count: 5
Sum: 275
100%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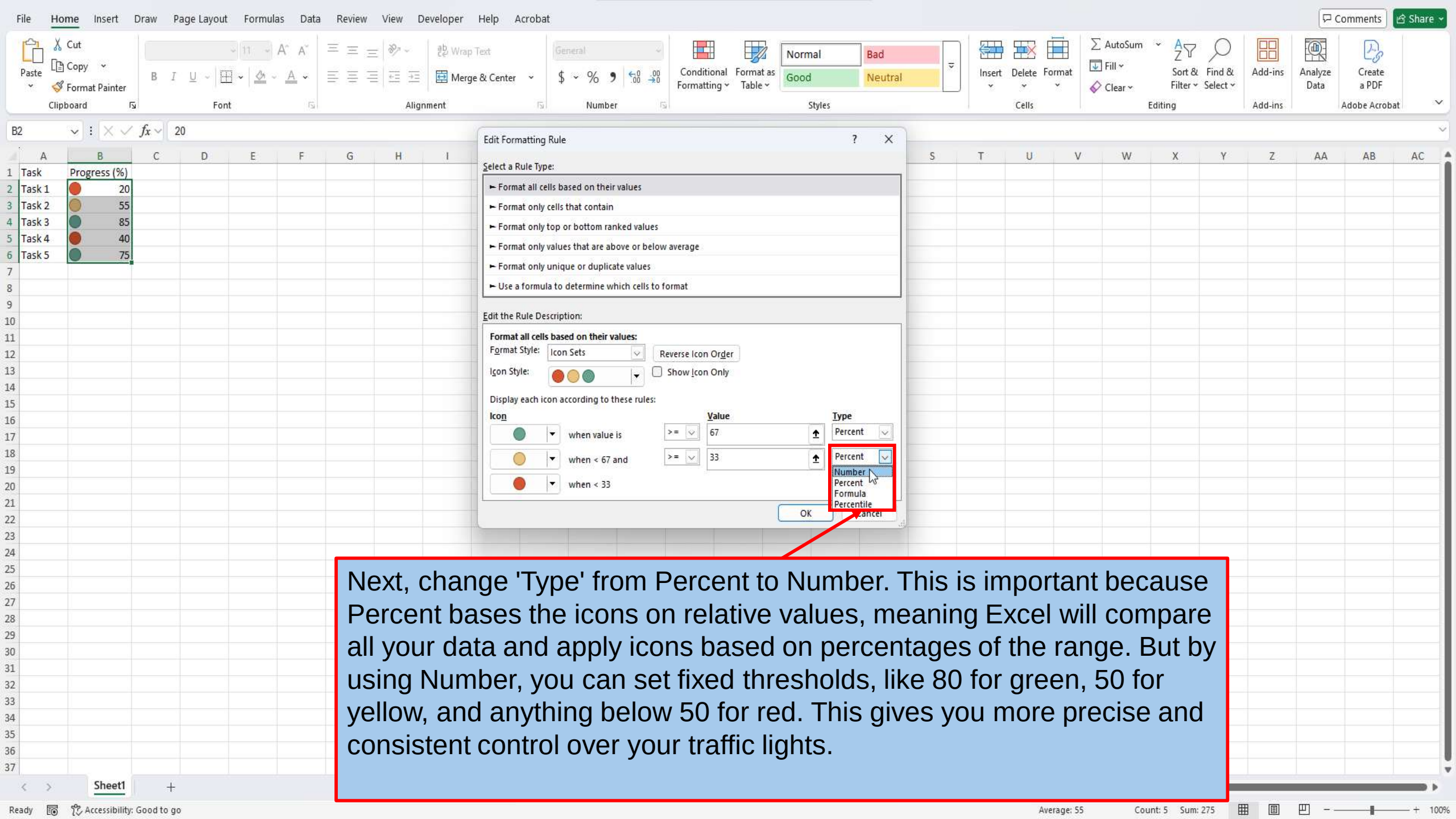
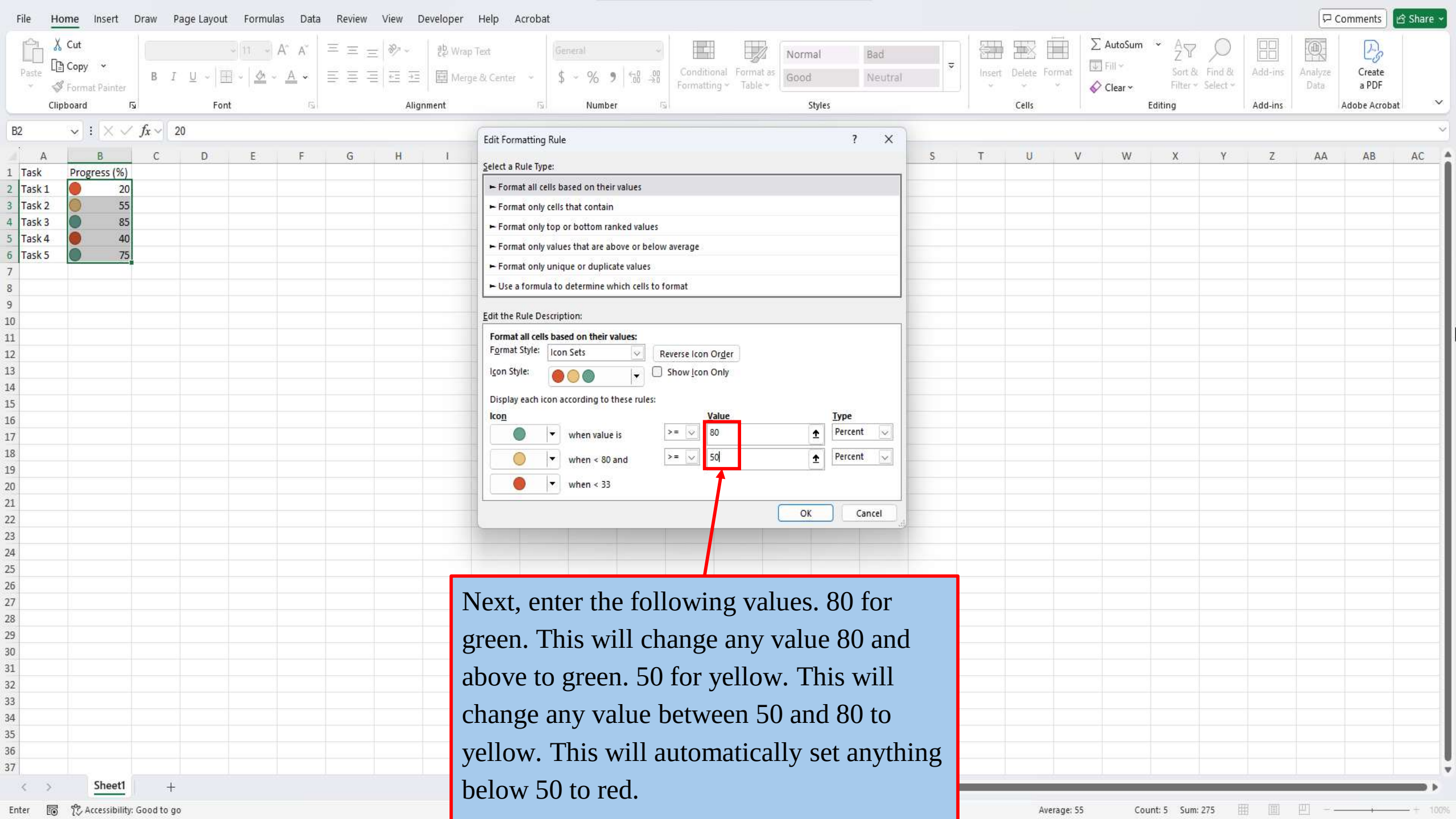
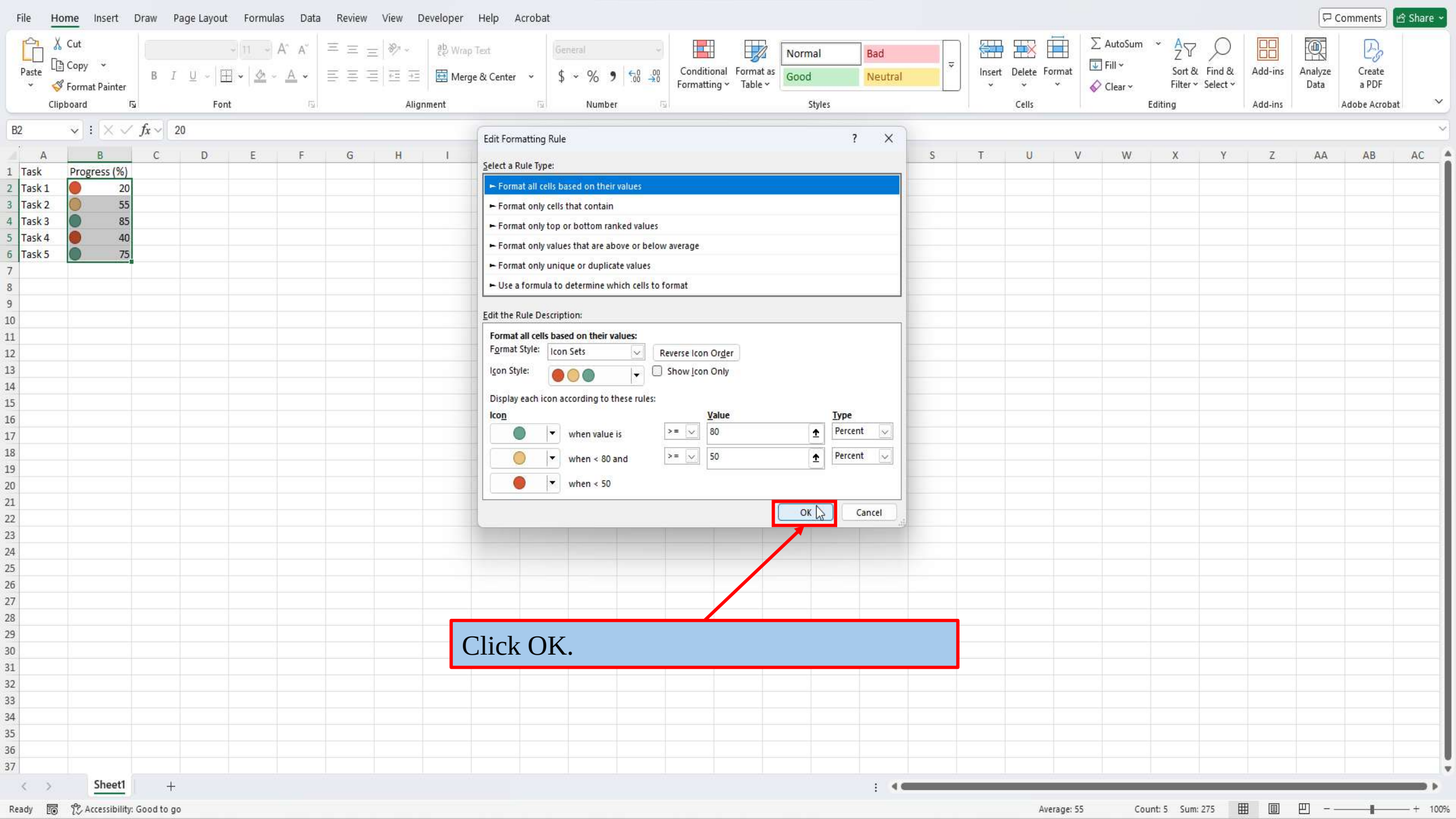
Insert
Delete
Format
Cells
AutoSum
Fill
Clear
Sort & Filter
Find & Select
Editing
Add-ins
Analyze Data
Create a PDF
Adobe Acrobat
B2
20
Task
Progress (%)
Task 1
20
Task 2
55
Task 3
85
Task 4
40
Task 5
75
Conditional Formatting Rules Manager
Show formatting rules for:
Current Selection
New Rule...
Edit Rule...
Delete Rule
Duplicate Rule
Rule (applied in order shown)
Format
Applies to
Stop If True
Icon Set
=$B$2:$B$6
OK
Close
Apply
And Choose Edit Rule.
Sheet1
Ready
Accessibility: Good to go
Average: 55
Count: 5
Sum: 275
100%


Edit Formatting Rule
Select a Rule Type:
Format all cells based on their values
Format only cells that contain
Format only top or bottom ranked values
Format only values that are above or below average
Format only unique or duplicate values
Use a formula to determine which cells to format
Edit the Rule Description:
Format all cells based on their values:
Format Style: Icon Sets
Reverse Icon Order
Icon Style:
Show Icon Only
Display each icon according to these rules:
Icon
Value
Type
when value is
>= 67
Percent
when < 67 and
>= 33
Percent
when < 33
Number
Percent
Formula
Percentile
OK
Cancel
Task
Progress (%)
Task 1
20
Task 2
55
Task 3
85
Task 4
40
Task 5
75
Next, change 'Type' from Percent to Number. This is important because Percent bases the icons on relative values, meaning Excel will compare all your data and apply icons based on percentages of the range. But by using Number, you can set fixed thresholds, like 80 for green, 50 for yellow, and anything below 50 for red. This gives you more precise and consistent control over your traffic lights.


File Home Insert Draw Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Developer Help Acrobat
Comments Share
Cut Copy Format Painter Paste Clipboard
Font Alignment Number
Wrap Text Merge & Center
Conditional Formatting Format as Table
Normal Bad Good Neutral Styles
Insert Delete Format Cells
AutoSum Fill Clear Sort & Filter Find & Select Editing
Add-ins Analyze Data Create a PDF Adobe Acrobat
B2 20
Task Progress (%)
Task 1 20
Task 2 55
Task 3 85
Task 4 40
Task 5 75
Edit Formatting Rule
Select a Rule Type:
Format all cells based on their values
Format only cells that contain
Format only top or bottom ranked values
Format only values that are above or below average
Format only unique or duplicate values
Use a formula to determine which cells to format
Edit the Rule Description:
Format all cells based on their values:
Format Style: Icon Sets
Reverse Icon Order
Icon Style:
Show Icon Only
Display each icon according to these rules:
Icon
Value
Type
when value is >= 80 Percent
when < 80 and >= 50 Percent
when < 33
OK
Cancel
Next, enter the following values. 80 for green. This will change any value 80 and above to green. 50 for yellow. This will change any value between 50 and 80 to yellow. This will automatically set anything below 50 to red.
Sheet1
Enter
Accessibility: Good to go
Average: 55
Count: 5
Sum: 275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Styles
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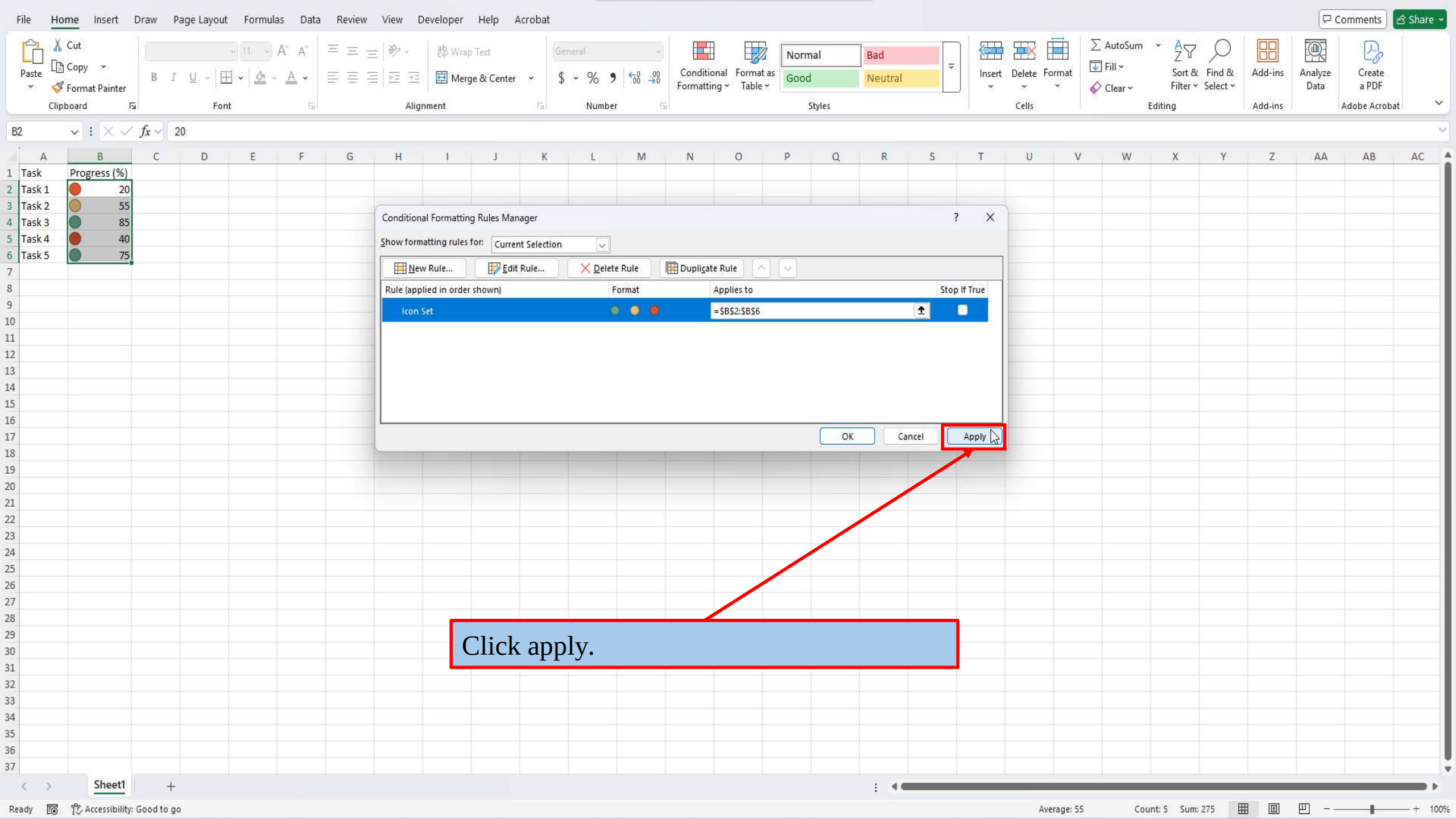
Sort & Filter
Find & Select
Editing
Add-ins
Analyze Data
Create a PDF
Adobe Acrobat
B2
20
Task
Progress (%)
Task 1
20
Task 2
55
Task 3
85
Task 4
40
Task 5
75
Edit Formatting Rule
Select a Rule Type:
Format all cells based on their values
Format only cells that contain
Format only top or bottom ranked values
Format only values that are above or below average
Format only unique or duplicate values
Use a formula to determine which cells to format
Edit the Rule Description:
Format all cells based on their values:
Format Style:
Icon Sets
Reverse Icon Order
Icon Style:
Show Icon Only
Display each icon according to these rules:
Icon
Value
Type
when value is
>=
80
Percent
when < 80 and
>=
50
Percent
when < 50
OK
Cancel
Click OK.
Sheet1
Ready
Accessibility: Good to go
Average: 55
Count: 5
Sum: 275
100%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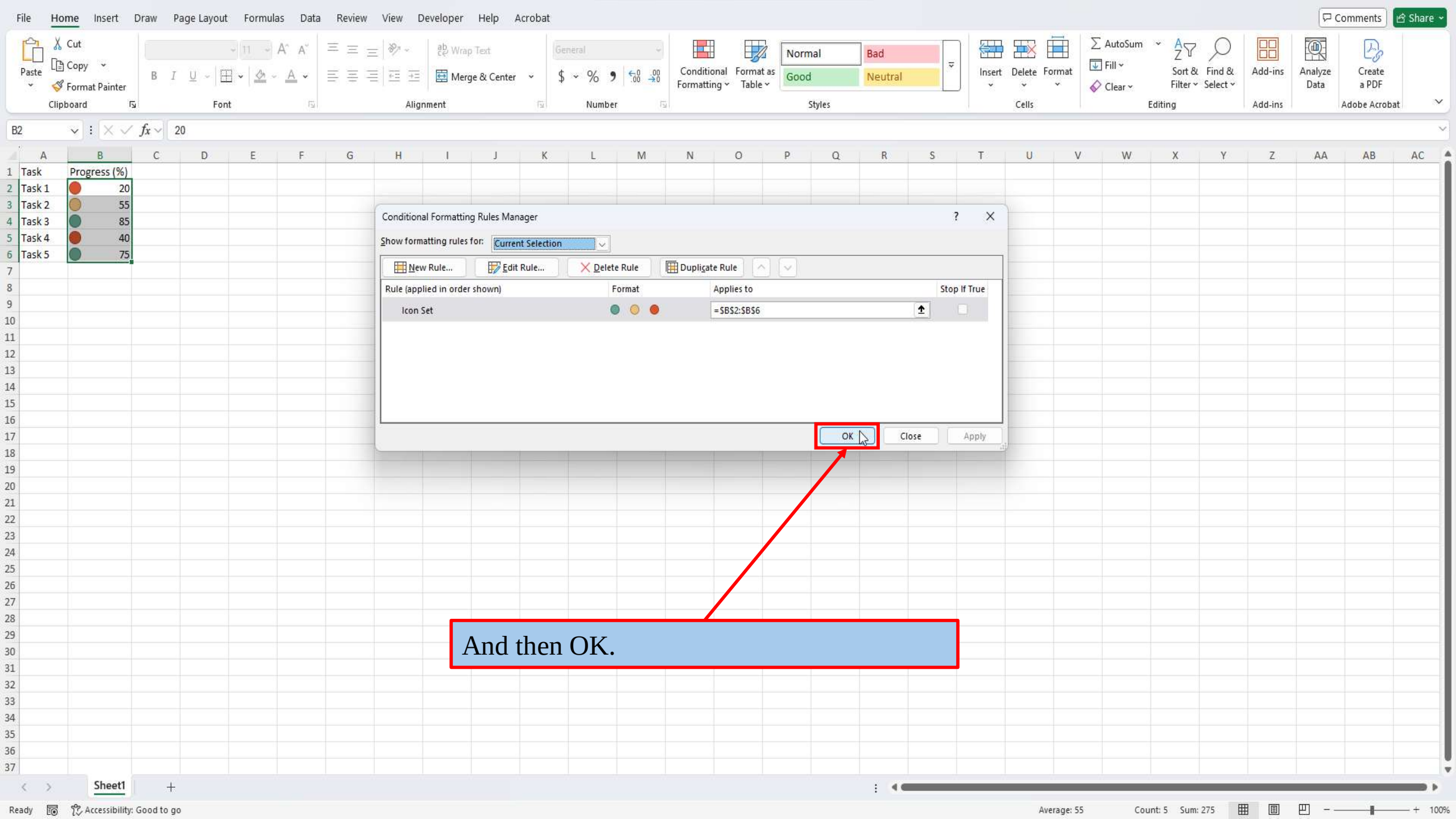
Cells
AutoSum
Fill
Clear
Sort & Filter
Find & Select
Editing
Add-ins
Analyze Data
Create a PDF
Adobe Acrobat
B2
20
Task
Progress (%)
Task 1
20
Task 2
55
Task 3
85
Task 4
40
Task 5
75
Conditional Formatting Rules Manager
Show formatting rules for:
Current Selection
New Rule...
Edit Rule...
Delete Rule
Duplicate Rule
Rule (applied in order shown)
Format
Applies to
Stop If True
Icon Set
=$B$2:$B$6
OK
Cancel
Apply
Click apply.
Sheet1
Ready
Accessibility: Good to go
Average: 55
Count: 5
Sum: 275
100%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Styles
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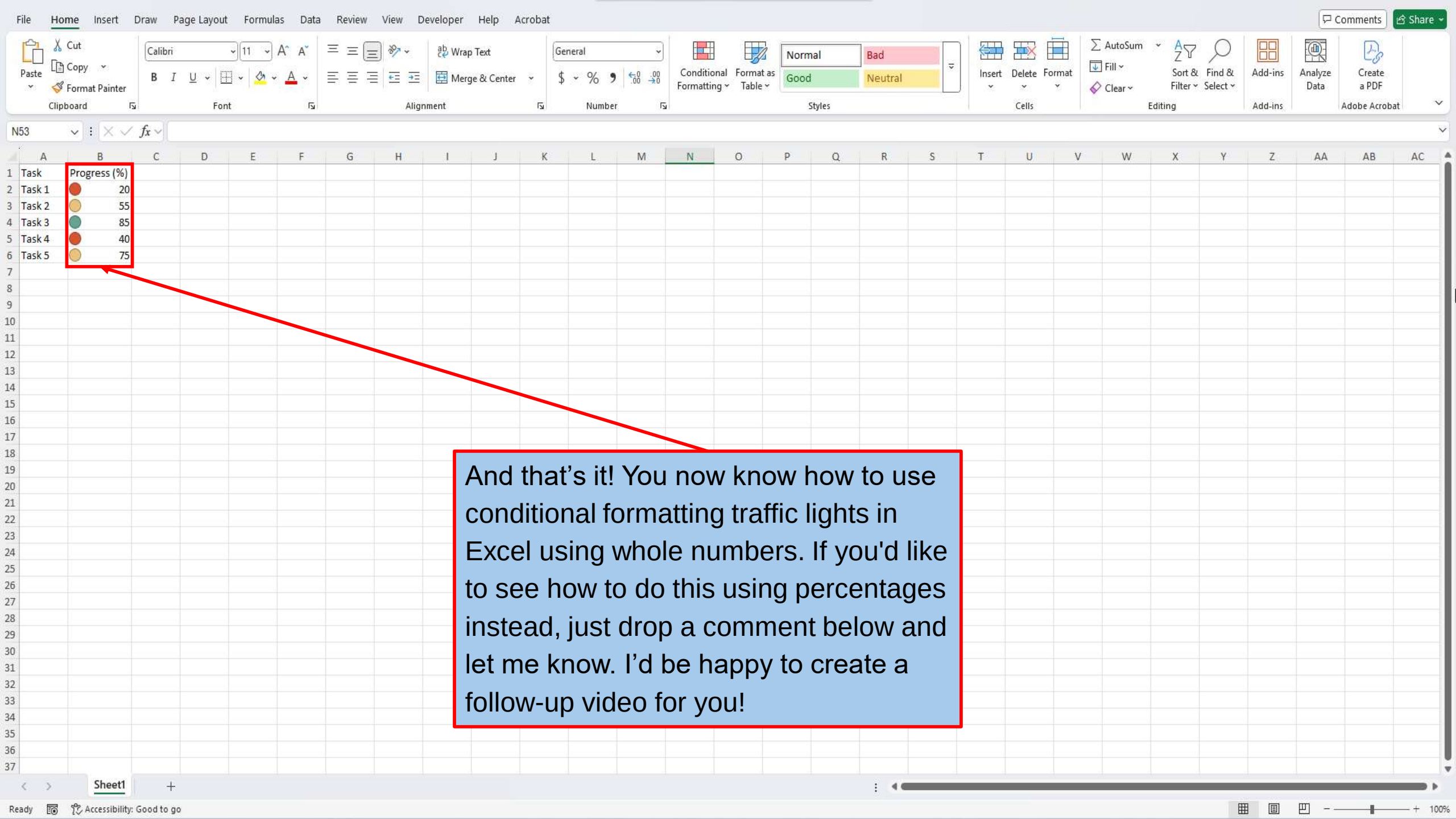
Delete
Format
Cells
AutoSum
Fill
Clear
Sort & Filter
Find & Select
Editing
Add-ins
Analyze Data
Create a PDF
Adobe Acrobat
B2
20
Task
Progress (%)
Task 1
20
Task 2
55
Task 3
85
Task 4
40
Task 5
75
Conditional Formatting Rules Manager
Show formatting rules for:
Current Selection
New Rule...
Edit Rule...
Delete Rule
Duplicate Rule
Rule (applied in order shown)
Format
Applies to
Stop If True
Icon Set
=$B$2:$B$6
OK
Close
Apply
And then OK.
Sheet1
Ready
Accessibility: Good to go
Average: 55
Count: 5
Sum: 275
100%


File Home Insert Draw Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Developer Help Acrobat
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Sort & Filter Find & Select
Editing
Add-ins
Add-ins
Analyze Data
Create a PDF
Adobe Acrobat
N53
Task
Progress (%)
Task 1 20
Task 2 55
Task 3 85
Task 4 40
Task 5 75
And that’s it! You now know how to use conditional formatting traffic lights in Excel using whole numbers. If you'd like to see how to do this using percentages instead, just drop a comment below and let me know. I’d be happy to create a follow-up video for you!
Sheet1
Ready
Accessibility: Good to go
100%

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